2: Mohsen E.O-5 (1958-1966) 1971 MIT Libraries Barker MIT Awlad Ali

Yet, even when the problem of role definition was solved, it was still difficult to follow closely all aspects and phases of any particular dispute. This was mainly the result of the semi-nomadic nature of the population. In settled communities, the anthropologist usually finds himself in the midst of the social life of the community. He might not be a part of it, but at least a major portion of it is happening around him. In the case of nomadic or semi-nomadic populations, the situation is different. There were no large tribal concentrations in the area. The largest residential unit was the camp, and it consisted of no more than thirteen tents which changed in composition quite rapidly. In one camp, out of the thirteen tents which were there when I joined, only six remained unchanged by the time I left three months later. Originally I had planned to stay in the small village of El-Hammam, which was believed to be in the tribal route of the major tribal segment in the area. It took me only a few weeks to realize that the tribal segments did not follow any definite migratory route, and for more than four weeks I saw nothing of the life of the group more than the few individuals who came occasionally to the small settlement to buy tea or sugar, or to catch the train to Alexandria. It was then that I decided to leave the settlement and live with the camp. My stay in the camp was very insightful as far as information about the daily activities of the camp members and the relationship between the camp and other tribal segments in the area. But the camp was a very small group and fairly isolated. Besides, there was no way of knowing how typical that camp was to the other camps in the area. I finally decided that the best strategy was to live with a number of camps in the surrounding area for relatively short periods of time, making my base of operation a relatively settled camp in close proximity to a number of other camps.

3:Evans-Pritchard-E-4,5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT Libyan Bedouin 8CT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

that he did not choose Cyrenaica as his field of labour but was compelled to settle in Libya for a time because the road to the west was closed by the French and the road to the east by the authorities in Cairo and Mecca. The Grand Sanusi was a cosmopolitan, a townsman, and more at home in the schools and libraries of Fez, Cairo, and Mecca than amid the lentisk and juniper of the Cyrenaican plateau or the thyme and wormwood of its rolling plains. Even after founding in 1843 what has become the Mother Lodge of the Order, al-Zawiya al-Baida, on the central Cyrenaican plateau, not far from the ancient city of Cyrene, and while the Sanusi movement was still young in the country, he returned in 1846 to Mecca and stayed there till 1853. Altogether he spent only about ten years of his teaching life in Cyrenaica, whereas he spent some twenty years in the Hijaz.

On his return to Cyrenaica he seems to have felt the need for greater solitude. He was then nearing seventy years of age and doubtless felt that what was left to him of life should be given to contemplation, prayer, and study. It may be true also, as is commonly stated in books written by Europeans, that he desired to place a wide stretch of desert between himself and the Turkish authorities who, as the Sanusiya movement grew, began to take greater interest in it. He therefore first went to live for a short while at al-'Azziyyat on the southern edge of the plateau, where he built a zawiya, and afterwards at Jaghbub, about 160 km. from the sea.

Jaghbub, now to become the centre of the Order and the seat of an Islamic University second only in Africa to al-Azhar, was till 1856, when the Grand Sanusi made it his seat, an uninhabited oasis, in which the water was brackish, highly sulphurous, and insufficient to irrigate more than a small area of gardens. It was not a place for luxurious living, though it seems to have been healthy and, unlike Siwa, free from malaria, but it had certain political advantages. It was out of reach of the Turkish, French, or Egyptian governments, it was on the main pilgrimage route from North-west Africa through Egypt to Mecca, and this pilgrimage route bisected at the oasis one of the trade routes from the coast to the Sahara and the Sudan. Moreover, since Cyrenaica is a peninsula, it was the most central point he could have chosen at that time to be in equal

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

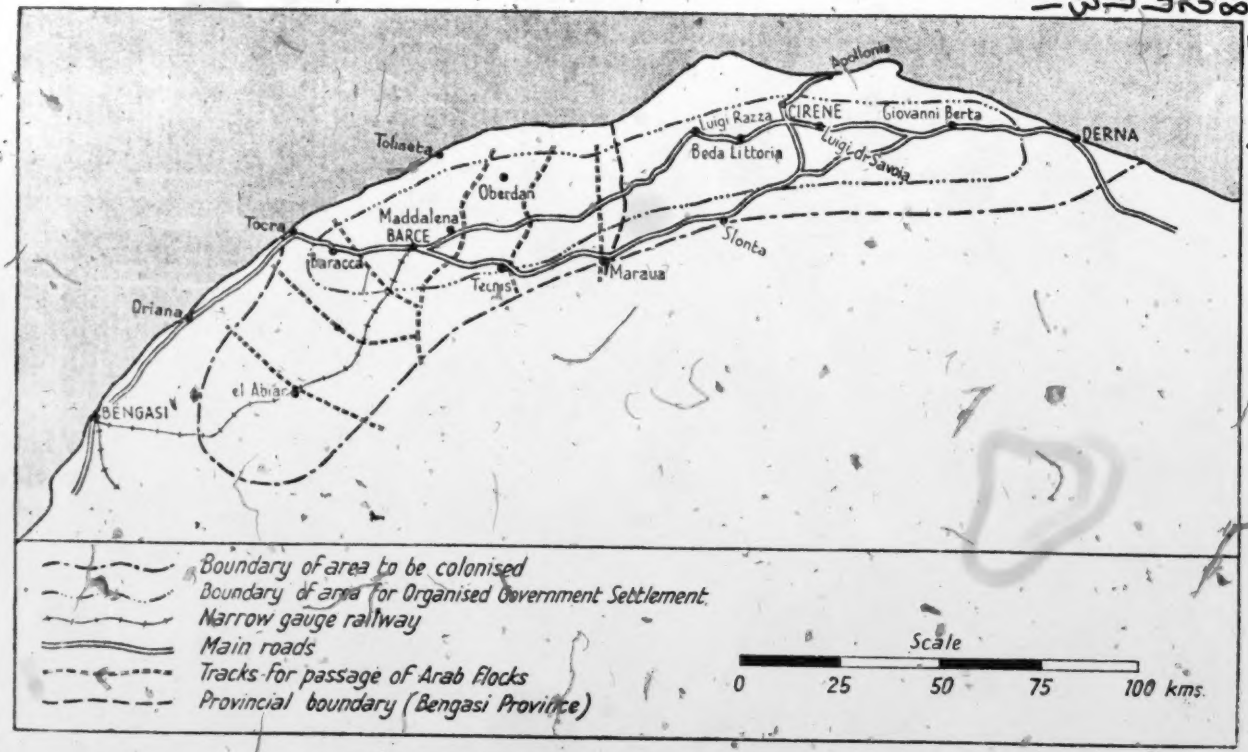
savants, and later at Mecca. He is said to have been an eloquent and inspiring leader and he was evidently an able organizer. Unlike his father the Grand Sanusi and his nephew Sayyid Ahmad al-Sharif he has left no writings behind and he seems to have had less interest than they in literature and speculation. He lived an austere life and was considered by his followers to have been a saint and worker of miracles as great, or greater, than his father.

The Order expanded considerably under Sayyid al-Mahdi's leadership, particularly into the Sahara and the Sudan, and its greatly extended missionary enterprises demanded his personal attention. The conversion of the heathen and semi-heathen tribes of these regions created political problems and the trading activities of the Order required organization. The trade routes through the Libyan oases to the coast had increased in importance since the rise of the Sudanese Mahdi in 1881 had closed the Nile route. Personal direction was difficult from Jaghbub, so in 1895 Sayyid al-Mahdi moved the seat of the Order to Kufra, a more central position than Jaghbub in the theocratic empire being slowly built up. He first went to live at the zawiya of al-Ustad but shortly afterwards built a new zawiya in which he resided, on a site which became known as al-Taj. He departed from Jaghbub amid the lamentations of his followers, only some of whom he was able to take with him to Kufra, leaving the rest behind at Jaghbub, with his nephew al-Sayyid Muhammad 'Abid as his titular representative there.

There are few places in the world so remote as Kufra oasis, but it was at the centre of the Sanusi empire and the meeting-place of a number of important desert routes. Before Sayyid al-Mahdi made it the seat of his Order, Kufra had been little more than a watering place for caravans and the centre for the wandering Tibbu tribes of the region, though the Zuwaya of al-Jikharra went there each year to collect dates. It now became an emporium through which caravans were constantly passing and exchange was carried on. The Sanusiya profited both by directly engaging in trade and transport and through customs dues.

The little village of mud and palmwood houses at al-Taj also became a centre of religious life and propaganda. The missionary efforts of the Order intensified all over Fazzan and into

*1175 [P. 224]
*648
102
167
489
233
131



The Italian plan for the colonization of northern Cyrenaica.

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942).
Sanusi

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

tions and gardens. On the other hand, it was recognized that if they were to be able to lead a nomadic life at all, and they had to do so if they were to rear their animals, they must have access to water-supplies and grazing-grounds, and that this would sometimes mean their crossing the plateau through the area of Italian colonization. To solve this problem corridors running north and south across the plateau were, as explained in an earlier section, marked out for the transit of Bedouin flocks and herds.

It was envisaged that the Bedouin would continue to lead a predominantly pastoral life on the more rugged parts of the first terrace of the plateau, on its southern slopes, and in the steppe country of the *sirwal*, the *barqa*, the Marmarica, and the Sirtica. It was thought that they had in these areas all the land they needed for grazing and catch-crop cultivation, though it was evident that in years of drought they could not have managed to survive without summer grazing on the plateau. Nevertheless, efforts were made to raise the economic level of the Bedouin by improving their methods of cultivation and stock-raising so that, as both producers and labourers, they might be more valuable an adjunct to Italian husbandry, and might become more dependent on the State and more closely linked with metropolitan activities. It was intended that they should constitute a cheap reserve of labour for general unskilled work and for seasonal labour on the farms of the colonists. By using them in this way it was hoped that it would be possible to avoid the growth of a metropolitan proletariat.[1] These efforts included, largely for political reasons, the creation of Arab colonization centres. Agricultural villages and farms were to be built by the *Ente* similar to, but smaller than, those built for the Italian immigrants. The first two such villages, Fiorita and Alba, were built in 1939. Each Arab farming family was provided with a house, a well, a camel, a cow, and farm implements. Like the Italian, the Arab colonist was to be first salaried labourer, then partner with the State, then mortgagor, and finally owner. As only thirty-two holdings were prepared at Fiorita and Alba the contribution to native agriculture cannot be regarded as more than a token one. Moreover, the Italians experienced difficulty in finding Arab colonists for even these

[1] Ibid., p. 622.